
A P P E N D I X A

Community Report

Note: This appendix is a report of the issues and hopes for the Dulles South area as presented by the residents and landowners in the community





Dulles South Community Report

May 26, 1992

Introduction

The Dulles South Planning Area covers approximately 25,000 acres or 39 square miles of land in the southeastern corner of Loudoun County. It is sparsely developed, with a rolling terrain and a distinct rural farming character. The area's rural beauty is often overlooked. Dulles South is also a community of about 600 families distributed on rural lots, farms and in small villages such as Arcola and Lenah. Dulles South residents have a strong sense of place derived from the unique character of the land, their relationship to the rest of

Loudoun County and the sense that they are not in the main-stream of Loudoun County development.

The Loudoun County Board of Supervisors invited residents and landowners to participate in a series of community workshops to develop a vision for the future of their community and to provide a framework for the policies in the Dulles South Area Management Plan (DSAMP). This is a report of what was said at those meetings and the direction given to the County as it continues to draft the Dulles South plan.

The Community Discussion

Dulles South residents have a strong interest in what happens in their community. This is clearly evident by the response to the DSAMP workshops that were conducted on March 26, April 9, and April 23, 1992. An average of 75 people attended each of the workshops and many attended all three.

Over the course of these meetings, planning staff worked with area residents and landowners to identify what people hoped would occur in Dulles South and what they foresaw as the hurdles or opportunities facing them. The three workshops each had a specific purpose:

- Workshop One:** Identify what kind of future people want for Dulles South; the Strengths, Weaknesses, Threats and Opportunities in Dulles South that might affect that vision;
- Workshop Two:** Analyze what current County plans and policies propose for Dulles South and identify needed changes or enhancements; and
- Workshop Three:** Identify land use scenarios and desirable design features that should be part of new development.

Community Workshop One

Future Dulles South

Dulles South will change from the rural community that has existed for the last two centuries, to an urban and suburban community. This is viewed as a likely result of continuing development pressure from the north and east. It is also considered the best opportunity to provide needed facilities, utilities, jobs and amenities to the area. To make the transition acceptable, new development must respect the natural, historic, and cultural features which contribute to the area's present quality of life. It must also reduce the impact of changing community character on existing residents. New development must benefit existing residents by making available needed utilities, services, and road improvements and by not forcing existing residents to "sell out".

New development in Dulles South should promote an affordable lifestyle for all residents through designs featuring a mix of housing types, public facilities, shopping and employment. The preferred

development pattern would include a number of distinct, compact communities built around a village or town center. A mix of manufacturing, resource, and service industries is also important to keep families here and to attract new families by offering jobs for various skills. Over-all, there should be a fiscally sound mix of residential, business and industrial uses.

*Community
Vision*

Strengths

Weaknesses

Threats

Opportunities

Strengths

Of all the positive attributes associated with life in Dulles South its location next to the Dulles International Airport stands out as the most important. The airport currently employs about 10,000 people and is one of the few in this country that has room for expansion. Protecting the airport from incompatible uses and attracting businesses and industries that will increase the demand for airport operations is important. Proximity to the Washington metropolitan area is also an important strength. The area is close enough to the

Capital to be attractive to commuters and far enough away to provide a distinct living environment.

The ownership pattern is a strength that could benefit planning in the area. Approximately 54% of the area is held by 17 landowners. A unified development pattern is possible with coordination between the County and these major property owners. The key to this strength will be the cooperation between the developers of five active projects totalling 6,600 acres or 26% of the total acreage in Dulles South.

Weaknesses

The lack of central sewer and water continues to be the paramount reason that new growth has bypassed Dulles South. This weakness is caused by both government policy and financial cost. Until the adoption of the *Choices and Changes General Plan*, the County's land use policies prohibited the extension of utility lines into Dulles South until an area management plan was completed. Even under the new *General Plan*, new development proposals would not be considered without the completion of an area management plan or before July 31, 1993, whichever comes first. Loudoun County Sanitation

Authority policy, leaves it up to the developer to extend utility lines. The *General Plan* supports this concept but calls for research into alternative financing techniques. To extend major lines from north of the Dulles Airport, along the Route 606 corridor; or to extend them through the Brambleton development to Dulles South will require investments beyond the capability of an individual developer. Sanitary sewer districts which allow the landowners to tax themselves at a higher rate in order to finance utility improvements are one financing alternative being investigated.

Roads are also a major weakness in the area's development potential. With the exception of Route 50, most existing roads in Dulles South are not designed to current State standards. There is very little, if any, available road capacity to accommodate new development. There are also few good links to other parts of the region. Route 50 provides the only access to the east. Route 606 provides access to Route 28, north of Dulles Airport and Route 621 is a good link to Leesburg. Other potential links to Manassas, Fairfax, the Dulles Toll Road Extension or Route 7 are either substandard surfaces or they are

planned only in the County's *General Plan* or in not yet completed development proffers.

Dulles South residents perceive their sense of physical and economic isolation from the rest of Loudoun County as a weakness. Without a strong voice in Leesburg, citizens fear Dulles South will be a lower priority area for County Services. There is a stronger link with Fairfax County, if only because most people in Dulles South shop there.

Threats

The biggest threat to Dulles South will be the County's inability to provide sewer and water. Especially under current economic conditions, the development community will be slow to finance utility lines. Given the current economic environment, the lack of services and a surplus of available property in Dulles North and the region, it is possible that the development proposals and speculative real estate activities may not lead to actual development. If the County is not able or willing to play a more active role in extending utilities to the area, either through direct financial involvement or by encouraging development to come to Dulles South, the area will not move forward and needed improvements will not be constructed.

Being unprepared for the changes that are

going to occur in Dulles South will also threaten the community's well being. A land use plan is needed to manage the transition from rural to suburban and urban. Residents are concerned that incompatible land uses will impact their properties. Some feel Dulles South could become a dumping area for less desirable uses such as a landfill or prison site similar to Lorton in Fairfax County. There is also the question of balance between the different land uses. Current General Plan policies propose a significant level of industrial development throughout the area, potentially at the cost of decreasing the area's value as a residential community. The Dulles South Area Management Plan should provide a more detailed land use strategy that addresses the area's specific concerns.

Opportunities

Because it is so close to the airport and the Washington Metropolitan area, economic development potential is viewed as the area's greatest opportunity. The airport's expansion will serve to increase development opportunities. The Route 50 corridor has the capacity to accommodate growth. Land values, though rising, are still relatively low compared to other areas of the County and region.

Dulles South went through the last development boom as a spectator. The County now has the opportunity to learn from the experiences of other areas and to create a plan which provides for development that will enhance the quality of life for area residents. The County has an opportunity to implement its compact, mixed use community design concept in an area that presents few constraints.

Community Workshop Two

Throughout the discussion at the first workshop, there were common concerns that ranked high in each discussion group. Using these concerns as discussion topics, residents at the second workshop evaluated the

current policy direction of the County as set out in the *Choices and Changes General Plan* (adopted September, 1991), to see if we are headed in the direction that we want to be going.

Sewer and Water

Participants agree with current County policy that all development in Dulles South should be connected to central, public utilities. They would expand on that policy to ensure that all existing residents are able to connect to central utilities along with new residents. The County should take the strongest measures to ensure that utility extensions for new development also benefit existing residents. Residents also feel that utility connections to existing uses should be paid for by either the County or the developer.

With regard to using the Loudoun County Sanitation Authority to manage utilities in the area, residents suggested that other operators should be examined if it would expedite the extension of utilities. There is support for alternative wastewater treatment suppliers such as the Upper Occoquan Sanitation Authority's Wastewater Treatment Facility in Fairfax County or to connecting to the Fairfax sewer and water lines east of the area.

Citizens feel the County's current policy of relying on the development community to pay the cost of extending lines to Dulles South ignores the need to help existing residents. The County should explore alternative funding mechanisms and encourage development activity in Dulles South that will extend utilities.

Community Focus

Sewer and Water

Transportation

Public Facilities

Economic Development

Good Planning

Transportation

Residents agree with *General Plan* policies that would make Routes 50 and 620 primary east/west thoroughfares, support improvements to secondary roads and investigate funding options for improvements. Proposed policy additions include more detail on needed road improvements, more attention to a multi-modal transit system linking dif-

ferent areas and uses in the County and greater emphasis on secondary road improvements.

Residents highlighted the need to make sure road improvements are completed as traffic volumes increase. There is no available capacity in the secondary road system and improvements will have to immediately parallel any new development.

Public Facilities and Services

Residents agree that the County and State should continue to be the principle service providers. Although proffers should be a part of the funding strategy, the 25% funding level was a concern. The 25% level should be reviewed from the point of

view that the proffers should not significantly drive up a developer's (homebuyer's) cost or discourage development. The County should seek a balance between public/private and taxpayer/user funding.

The type and number of public facilities should reflect the economic reality of what the community can afford. Concern was expressed over the type and number of recreational facilities required in the current Parks and Recreation Service Plan. It was suggested that service plans for Dulles South be adopted through public hearings. Nonetheless, the County should use the strongest legal means to require facilities and services.

Economic Development

General Plan policies relating to the protection of Dulles Airport are consistent with the interests of area residents. Residents agree with policies that encourage the Airport's expansion and non-residential development close to the airport and in high noise zones. There is less support for policies that encourage diabase quarry operations. Most residents do not want to see additional quarries because of associated truck traffic and the impact the quarries have on the value of adjacent properties.

Farming is a tenuous enterprise in Dulles South because the soils are not as productive as elsewhere in the County. Farming viability is very sensitive to the potential impacts of encroaching development. Policies should be enhanced to provide more

In addition to linear parks and trails, emphasis should be put on active facilities (athletic fields and community parks) and on open spaces within neighborhoods and not just on their periphery. Fire and facilities should also be part of the County's proffer objectives. Combining different uses and services in the same facility should be used to keep costs down. (Parks and recreation currently shares athletic fields with schools).

protection for existing farms and farmers should be encouraged to operate as long as they want.

Efforts to attract new business should focus on "big" business; the corporate headquarters and industries that represent high tax revenue for the County. Policies should also protect and encourage small businesses such as home based operations. Route 50 should be a gateway corridor with a mix of light industrial, commercial and high density residential uses. Residents cited the Avion and Lafayette business parks as preferred examples of a positive corporate image along Route 50. During the transition, the development potential for property zoned C-1 along Route 50 should be protected.

Good Planning

The good planning topic of Workshop Two consolidated discussions of timing, land use pattern and intensity of new development. There is a common interest in involving residents early in the review of project applications. Several speakers acknowledged that knowing what is proposed in their area adds a level of security to their lives.

Area residents feel the County should encourage new development to come to Dulles South as soon as possible. The County needs to be a positive partner in the process and reduce barriers such as the 1993 rezoning horizon and the 1996 construction horizon.

The Dulles South community should develop as a series of mixed use developments combining a

balance of residential, commercial and business uses. Development should follow the County's traditional design concepts with higher density uses located near highways and town centers. Neighborhoods and communities need to provide a safe and convenient pedestrian environment. They should be designed around features that create a community identity.

Important natural and historic features need to be protected and a portion of the community should be preserved as open space. Again, residents feel that **General Plan** policies are vague. Specific direction about the location of key natural features and the amount of open space to be preserved needs to be included in the Dulles South plan.

"I have lived in the Dulles South area for 80 years. I hope, in my remaining years, to see this area move into the 20th century..."

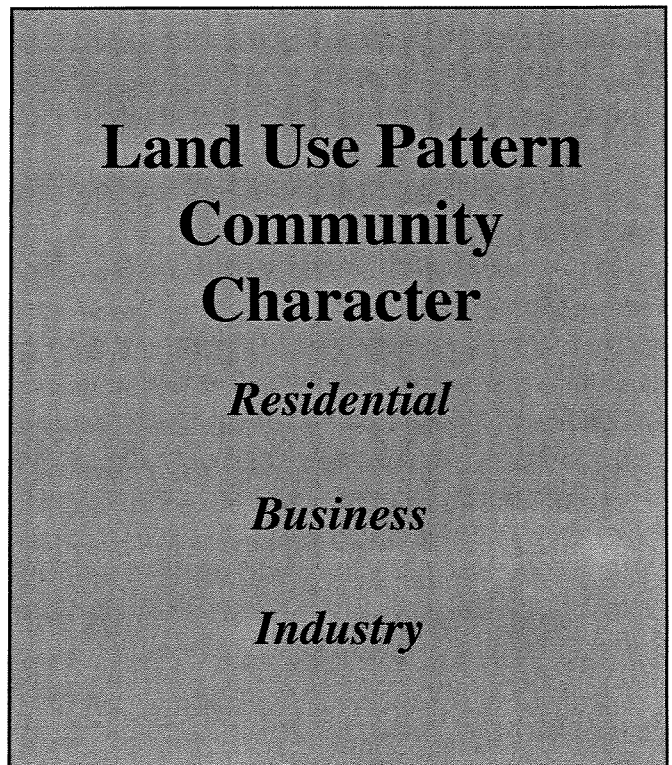
Community Workshop Three

Workshop Three was a discussion of the bricks and mortar of development: What it should look like and how it should relate to existing land uses. Residents were asked to describe the features

they felt should be included in a "good" residential, business, and industrial development and how different land uses should relate to each other.

Land Use Pattern

The land use pattern in Dulles South should reflect the capacity of the road network and the need to protect Dulles Airport and active farms. Land uses should be located in areas that allow the separation of residential and industrial traffic. Residents propose that industrial uses be located near highways. The Route 50 corridor should be given extra attention. It is an appropriate location for commercial and light industrial uses. Heavy industry uses should be "pulled away" from Route 50 and buffers (more appropriate land uses, landscaping or some alternative) provided. The 65 Ldn should continue to prohibit residential development and serve as the location of industry. Substantial industrial development outside the Ldn 65 is not appropriate. Plan policies should promote a mixed use development pattern where people can live, work, and shop in the same community. The mix of uses must be compatible to protect residents and it must reflect the needs of owners of big and small properties.



Residential Development

Residential Development should be located where the roads have available capacity and are safe. There should be flexibility in the types of housing in the area. Affordable housing should be scattered throughout Dulles South. Higher density housing should be located where the roads and services are available and may also locate near industrial uses. Local or small scale retail uses are appropriate in residential developments provided they do not attract outside traffic into the neighborhood. The proposed Artery project was identified as a positive example of the mixed use concept.

It is very important that the facilities constructed to serve new developments also be available

for existing residents. The location of amenities such as parks should take into account the existing neighborhood to ensure they are accessible to everyone.

Changes in the County's Aircraft Noise policies in the **General Plan** threaten to prohibit residential development from a larger area of Dulles South than the current policies. Existing residents who have homes in the current noise impact area are concerned about the effect of County policy on the resale value of their homes. These residents should be permitted the full enjoyment of their property and the viability of residential neighborhoods in the noise impact area should be maintained.

Business Development

Residents feel the county should increase its efforts to attract business to Dulles South. One action proposed is to seek Certified Business Community status for the County. The Route 50 corridor warrants careful attention. Route 50 can develop as a gateway to Loudoun County with businesses such as those found in the Avion and Lafayette business parks. Suggestions included creating a highway corridor district to implement design guidelines and to prevent "commercial clutter". Consideration should be given to the service road along Route 50 to allow smaller businesses to locate there and to assist in a transition from "cluttered" commercial to larger scale uses. Existing businesses need to be protected and rather

than restrict C-1 development, policies should provide density incentives to encourage consolidation of lots.

Major, regional commercial uses should be part of Dulles South. Proposals were put forward for a large scale retail center, a regional shopping center and discount retailers. These uses should be put on separate sites, away from industrial parks. Otherwise, the commercial traffic would conflict with industrial traffic and affect the quality of the industrial development. Commercial office or light industrial uses may be appropriate as perimeter uses in industrial parks and may also serve to separate heavy industry uses from Route 50.

Industrial Development

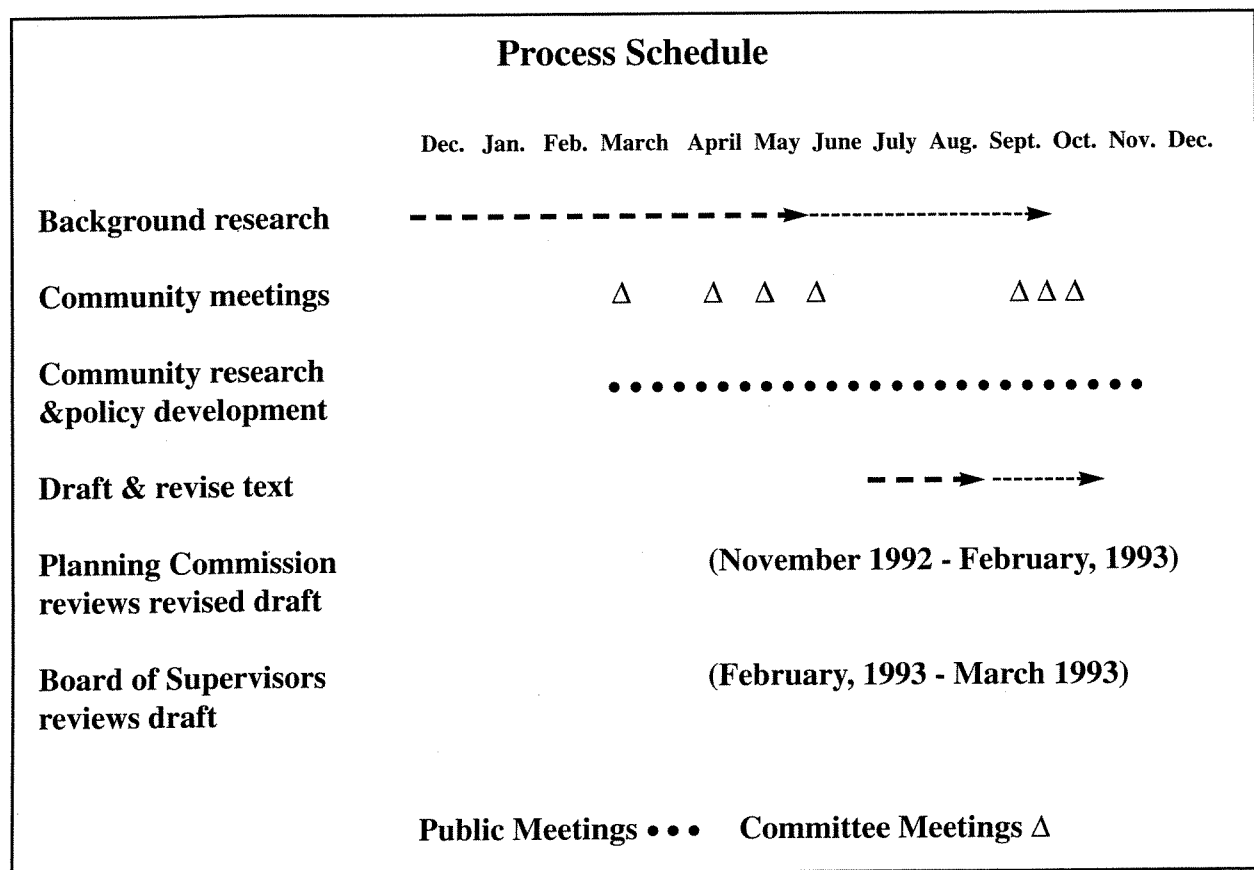
The Route 50 corridor is not an appropriate location for heavy or smokestack industry, although such uses could be placed behind office and light industries. Regional commercial and industrial uses are not always compatible and therefore should be located in separate developments. Otherwise, industrial development should be located primarily inside the Ldn 65 noise zone. Dulles South should not become the dumping ground for smokestack industries and those which are environmentally hazardous.

The impact of industries should be minimized by keeping truck traffic away from residential streets and making sure industry locates where there is available road capacity. Buffers and screening is important. There should also be a transition area between residential and industrial uses. Heavy industry should be clustered together. For example, asphalt and concrete plants, truck repair and heavy equipment storage should be located close to each other.

Next Steps

The residents and landowners in Dulles South have provided The Dulles South Area Management Plan Citizens' Committee with a substantial amount of information and direction regarding what they feel is important to the Dulles South of the future. This information has already begun to form the framework for the Committee's next task of preparing specific policies. The Committee is also gathering data from agencies such as the Loudoun County Sanitation Authority and Metropolitan Washington Airports Authority and from County departments, the Fiscal Impact Model Technical Review Committee and officials from other Counties.

In June the Citizens' Committee will once again provide the Dulles South residents and landowners with an opportunity to speak about issues in Dulles South. This Public Comment Meeting will allow you to comment on the findings of this report and raise issues or concerns that are unique to you or which did not arise in any of the workshops. Following the Comment Meeting, the Committee will sit down to complete the initial draft of the Area Management Plan. That draft is scheduled for public review during the month of October, 1991.



For those wishing additional information, summary reports of each workshop are available at the Loudoun County Planning Department. We wish to thank those interested citizens who committed the time and energy to assist the Dulles South Area Management Plan Citizens' Committee. We encour-

age you to continue to follow the process and to join us at the Public Comment Meeting on June 4 at 7:00 p.m. in the Arcola Community Center and in the Fall when the draft Dulles South Plan is presented for public review.